

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph beginning at page 4 line1, with the following amended paragraph.

In light of the foregoing concerns, the assignee hereof has developed a novel, multi-functional, "hybrid" access-and-transport system, called the "C7" system, that is capable of supporting a wide variety of user interfaces, in terms of bandwidth, density, interface and application. It is a "hybrid" system, in that it is capable of efficiently gathering, grooming, and transporting both classical time division multiplexed ("TDM") and packet-switched (i.e., ATM, Multiprotocol Label Switching ("MPLS"), IP, Packet Over SONET ("POS"), and Frame Relay) types of traffic streams in their respective formats and protocols, thereby maximizing available bandwidth through the use of statistical multiplexing, while preserving or even improving the QoS level achievable in such a disparate traffic mix. The C7 system can be deployed in any of several different topologies, including linear point-to-point, ring, star, mesh or any combination of the foregoing. For more information see U.S. patent application, ~~Attorney Docket No. M-11699-US~~ 09/874,352 (now US Patent 6,798,784) entitled "Concurrent Switching of Synchronous and Asynchronous Traffic" by J. Dove et al., which is incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace paragraph beginning at page 4 line16, with the following amended paragraph.

The word "GigaPoint" describes a point-to-point link using a transmission rate measured in gigabits per second (Gbps). FIG. 1A is an illustration of one embodiment of a data transfer system 1 that establishes a representative environment of the present invention. The representative data transport system operates at a Gbps rate and is fully disclosed in co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. \_\_\_\_\_ (Attorney Docket No. M-8457-US), 09/874,402 entitled BACKPLANE BUS, which is herein incorporated by reference for all purposes.